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UNCLAS BRATISLAVA 000629

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: CLONING BAN: SLOVAKIA WILL NOT CO-SPONSOR COSTA
RICAN RESOLUTION

REF: SECSTATE 121618

1. POLOFF DELIVERED REFTEL DEMARCHE TO DRAHOSLAV STEFANIK, DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL LAW DEPARTMENT AT THE SLOVAK MFA. STEFANIK STATED THAT SLOVAKIA WILL SUPPORT THE COSTA RICAN RESOLUTION AS IT DID LAST YEAR, BUT HAS DECIDED NOT TO CO-SPONSOR IN THE SIXTH COMMITTEE. DEBATE REGARDING SLOVAKIA'S POSITION ON HUMAN CLONING WILL REOPEN IN SEPTEMBER WHEN THE MFA SUBMITS ITS UN PRIORITIES TO THE CABINET FOR APPROVAL. HOWEVER, STEFANIK STRESSED THAT ANY CHANGE IN THIS POSITION IS UNLIKELY CONSIDERING THE DIVERGENT VIEWS PRESENT IN SLOVAKIA. HE STATED THAT SLOVAKIA SOUGHT A COMPROMISE TO BALANCE VARIOUS VIEWS BOTH DOMESTICALLY AND IN THE REGION. STEFANIK SUGGESTED HAVING A FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION IN SEPTEMBER.

2. POLOFFS ALSO MET MONS. BERT VAN MEGEN, FIRST SECRETARY IN THE PAPAL NUNCIO'S OFFICE, TO SEEK CLOSER COOPERATION IN ENCOURAGING THE SLOVAK GOVERNMENT TO CO-SPONSOR THE RESOLUTION. HE WAS OPTIMISTIC THAT SLOVAK GOVERNMENT SUPPORT WAS STEADFAST SINCE THE NEW DRAFT CRIMINAL CODE INCLUDES A COMPREHENSIVE BAN ON CLONING. HE ADDED THAT A MEMBER OF THE BISHOPS' CONFERENCE SITS ON THE SLOVAK BIO-ETHICS COMMITTEE AND IS ONE OF SLOVAKIA'S SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVES AT THE UN. VAN MEGEN WAS ALSO ENCOURAGED BY SLOVAKIA'S INSISTENCE TO MENTION GOD IN THE EU CONSTITUTION PREAMBLE. HE CONCLUDED THAT SLOVAKIA IS MORE LIKELY THIS YEAR TO CO-SPONSOR THE RESOLUTION, NOW THAT EU ACCESSION IS COMPLETE.

3. A JOINT DEMARCHE WITH COSTA RICA AND THE PAPAL NUNCIATE IN SEPTEMBER MIGHT BE A NEXT STEP. ACCORDING TO THE SLOVAK MFA, THE LAST COSTA RICAN DEMARCHE ON THIS ISSUE WAS TWO MONTHS AGO. (NOTE: COSTA RICA DOES NOT HAVE AN EMBASSY IN BRATISLAVA, SO TIMING WOULD HAVE TO BE COORDINATED WITH A NON-RESIDENT EMBASSY.) POST WILL CONTINUE TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSED BAN ON CLONING WITH OFFICIALS IN THE MINISTRIES OF HEALTH AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

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